

City of Rockville Commission on the Environment  
October 10, 2007 Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Faith Klareich (FK), Seth Adams (SA), Michelle Clark (MC), David Davis (DD), Beri Kravitz (BK), Tolulope Odunlami (TO) and Geoff Sanders (GS).

Absent: Kris Dighe (KD) and Sura Yakowitz (SY).

Also in attendance: Staff Liaison Nate Wall (NW); Mark Charles (MCh) – Chief of Environment Management.

**1. Welcome, News and Agenda Review**

The meeting was called to order at 7:34 pm in the Blue Crab Room at Rockville City Hall.

MCh updates the Commission on the recent adoption by Mayor & Council of the [Strategy for a Sustainable Rockville](#), and mentions some of the projects that will be addressed first. He also mentioned the Public Works accreditation process that has just begun – this will require broad participation across DPW to submit SOPs and other guidelines for how certain types of work proceeds. While there is no one “environmental” category in the accreditation process, many of the over 500 practices touch upon environmental concerns to some degree.

FK mentioned the DOE grants for educational purposes for governments – is this something Rockville would like to apply for now? Even if we aren’t ready for such a program, should we apply to “get in line” for next year? Perhaps involve the Maryland Energy Administration.

**2. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

MC makes a motion to approve the September 11, 2007 meeting minutes; DD seconds. Minutes passed into record by unanimous vote.

**3. Debrief from October 1<sup>st</sup> Mayor & Council Meeting**

Both the Strategy for a Sustainable Rockville as well as a resolution for the City to join ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability (and specifically participate in their Cities for Climate Protection Campaign) were presented at the Oct. 1, 2007 Mayor & Council meeting. All five members were very supportive of both issues. In particular, the Council applauded the Sustainability Strategy for its statement of sustainability goals in an “adoptable fashion”, and the overall positive tone of the document – this is a document they were happy to endorse. The Environmental Management Division will now start bringing individual projects to the Mayor & Council for approval from the list given in the Strategy. Commissioners are free to provide comments on particular issues they feel should be prioritized from those listed as “short term goals”; otherwise, staff will keep the Commission informed on progress towards the Sustainability goals, and will involved the Commission directly where appropriate (e.g., an annual sustainability report card is something the Commission has discussed in the past, and has created some possible benchmarks for doing so).

**4. Work Session and/or Submission of Procedure Change – Boards & Commissions**

Following the September 17<sup>th</sup> Mayor & Council meeting on the creation of a Refuse & Recycling Commission, the Rockville Gazette ran an article that presented the Environment Commission in a somewhat unfavorable light. This occurred because the Commission had to present their statement at the very beginning of the Mayor & Council meeting during citizen forum, and much later in the evening when the Refuse & Recycling Commission was being discussed, did not have a chance to clarify any misinterpretations that may have been made based on their earlier comments. This lead FK to ask the Mayor & Council for a worksession to discuss the best way for all Boards and

City of Rockville Commission on the Environment  
October 10, 2007 Meeting Minutes

Commissions to present information to the Mayor & Council on specific agenda items to avoid similar situations in the future. Mayor & Council agreed, so the EC should discuss how best to proceed.

Speaking of information in the Gazette, TO said that it would be good for the Commission to have their own outlet for getting information out. NW mentioned that the City could set up an “environment” list serve, where people interested in getting one-way environmental emails from the City could sign up. The Commission could send out announcements when new position papers are posted to their website, or could send out their public comments to pending Mayor & Council agenda items.

MC was also interested in getting links to press releases involving the EC, such as their recent EPA award. FK would like to consider putting up bios on the Commissioners, so that people could realize the diversity and depth of experience represented by the EC.

NW will inquire about any photos from the EPA awards event.

**5. Rockville Green Building Program Development**

GS mentioned that the HPB group will provide a debrief on LEED-ND at November’s meeting. The group has determined that JBG’s Twinbrook Station is part of the LEED-ND pilot program. The group meets again on October 23<sup>rd</sup> and will discuss this issue further.

FK and MCh had attended a recent meeting where Howard County’s green building program was released. Both felt the program lacked in substance, and appeared to be mostly symbolic legislation lacking in scope compared with the recent Montgomery County or DC programs.

Rockville would like to start in on the creation of its own green building program this winter. The building moratorium is currently in place until June 2008; the program would likely not be able to make this deadline, but a reasonable goal may be adoptions by December 2008. The Commission has several ideas on how to coordinate stakeholder input at the outset of this process – City staff and the Commission’s HPB and possibly Outreach working groups should meet independently to discuss the approach on the green building program development.

**6. New Maryland Office of Sustainability**

FK mentioned the creation of this new state-level office within the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The Office is in its developmental stages (only 6 people so far), so it is not yet clear what role it may play in coordinating sustainability issues across the State. More discussion on the relevance of this office can occur next month due to time constraints.

**7. Working Group Updates**

Tabled until next meeting due to time constraints.

**8. Staff Updates**

NW mentioned that the Rec & Parks Dept is creating a PROS (Parks, Recreation and Open Space) Plan, are holding two public meetings on the subject: one tonight (10/10), and the next tomorrow night (10/11) at the Senior Center. The PROS Plan will in some ways update an old plan from the 80s, but in essence will start from scratch in evaluating the needs and priorities of park land, recreational opportunities and open space within Rockville. Some of the guidance for this plan is being taken from Chapter 6 of the City’s Master Plan.

City of Rockville Commission on the Environment  
October 10, 2007 Meeting Minutes

RORZOR has now finished their full draft of the zoning ordinance, and will be releasing it for public review and comment very soon. We will likely have a discussion about this at our next meeting, and the Commission will want to make a significant effort in reviewing and commenting on this draft as the zoning ordinance has the most impact upon a city's future built and natural environment than any other single plan a city develops.

NW has met with the City's Graphics Division to discuss an approach for a consistent look and feel to environmental outreach materials. We will be developing templates for different types of materials (residential outreach, reports, notices of violation of our WQPO, etc) and have them also color/thematically coded to match up with various outreach areas (such as watershed protection, energy & climate protection, etc). The Commission could use these same templates, and insert elements into them identifying the outreach as a product of the Environment Commission. NW can work through Graphics if the Commission would like to start provided text and possibly some images for outreach material.

**9. Wrap-Up and Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 9:36 pm.